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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/551,421	09/30/2005	Don Stephan Engelbrecht	2001-1403	3847
<div>466 7590 06/22/2007</div> <div>YOUNG & THOMPSON 745 SOUTH 23RD STREET 2ND FLOOR ARLINGTON, VA 22202</div> <div>EXAMINER THOMAS, ALEXANDER S</div> <div>ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER</div> <div>1772</div> <div>MAIL DATE DELIVERY MODE</div> <div>06/22/2007 PAPER</div>				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/551,421	Applicant(s) ENGELBRECHT, DON STEPHAN	
	Examiner Alexander Thomas	Art Unit 1772	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/30/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the UK patent document 2209041 in view of the German patent document 20116169 and Ruby 5,232,762. The primary reference discloses the invention substantially as claimed, namely a pillar protector comprising a impact absorbing blanket 4 and a plastic sleeve 2 fitted around the blanket; see Figure 2. The outer surface of the sleeve may be printed with indicia and provided with a closure means; see the Abstract and claims. However, the primary reference does not teach a segmented impact absorbing layer formed from foam with particles therein. The German patent document discloses the use of a foam matrix containing particles as an impact absorbing layer in a pillar protecting product; see the instant specification page 1, lines 7-12. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a foam matrix containing particles as taught in the German patent document as the impact layer in the product of the primary reference in order to provide a desired degree of pillar protection. Adjusting the size of filler material in the foam composition is well within the purview of one of ordinary skill in the art in order to optimize physical properties of the layer. Ruby teaches segmenting a

layer in order to allow a laminate to be formed into a curved shape; see Figures. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to segment the inner layer of the primary reference's product in view of the teachings in Ruby to allow the product to readily form a bent profile.

Regarding claim 13, the term "recycled" is a process limitation that does not provide any structurally distinguishing features to the claimed product. Regarding claim 15, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to adjust the spacing of the segments of foam material to any amount depending on the desired insulating properties and necessary flexibility needed to cover a specific pillar. Concerning claim 19, the disclosure in the primary reference of the use of canvas, tarpaulin, plastic, etc, suggests the use of a sailcloth material. Regarding claim 20, a duplication of parts is within the purview and obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander Thomas whose telephone number is 571-272-1502. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-4:00 M-THUR.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached on 571-272-1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexander S. Thomas".

ALEXANDER S. THOMAS
PRIMARY EXAMINER